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ABSTRACT

El Camino's first year as a fundamental high school is described. Students wanting to attend El Camino had to apply and agree to the new fundamental emphasis and school rules. As a result, the composition of El Camino's student body changed to one representing all ability levels. Other major changes at El Camino were: (1) academic emphasis was placed on basic skills and (2) school rules such as closed campus, dress code, and no smoking were communicated and enforced. Academic achievement during the first year was measured by the district's minimum competency tests and the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP). Overall academic achievement remained high. Average test scores on TAP were well above the national average and the percent passing the minimum competency tests increased. Attitudes toward El Camino were measured by surveys completed by parents, students and staff. General observations by all groups were that coursework was harder this year; students had more homework; students learned more; the new rules such as closed campus and dress code were enforced but unpopular with the students; and El Camino would improve more next year. (Author/GK)

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El Camino's 1st Year as a Fundamental High School –

a descriptive report

July 1980

TM810 057

Summary

El Camino's first year as a fundamental high school with open enrollment was one of change. Students who wanted to attend El Camino had to apply and agree to the new fundamental emphasis and school rules. As a result, the composition of El Camino's student body changed. Students from other San Juan high schools and from private schools transferred in and some El Camino students chose to go to other schools. Other major changes at El Camino were: (1) academic emphasis was placed on basic skills; and (2) school rules such as closed campus, dress code, and no smoking were communicated and enforced.

Academic achievement during the first year was measured by the district's minimum competency tests and the *Tests of Achievement and Proficiency* (TAP), a nationally normed test. Overall academic achievement, as measured by these tests, remained high. Average test scores on the TAP were well above the national average and the percent passing the minimum competency tests increased.

Attitudes toward El Camino were measured by surveys completed in May by parents, students and staff. These groups tended to have positive feeling about El Camino and its first year as a fundamental high school. Staff members had the most favorable ratings followed by parents and students. General observations by all groups were that, (1) coursework was harder this year, (2) students had more homework, (3) students learned more, (4) the new rules such as closed campus and dress code were enforced but unpopular with the students, and (5) El Camino would improve more next year.

Overall, El Camino's first year as a fundamental high school was good. Academic achievement remained high and the attitudes of parents, students and staff were generally supportive.

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RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

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and

Patricia Fiedler, Head Counselor at El Camino

BACKGROUND

For the past several years a "Back to Basics" plea directed toward elementary through secondary education has been voiced by the public. Both the media and school authorities have indicated increasing community interest in a more basic, or fundamental, education. A recent example of this on-going concern by the public was printed in the June 26, 1980, issue of the *Sacramento Bee*. The *Bee* article cites a Gallup Poll report on the public's attitudes toward public education. Specifically, the poll indicated that 60 percent of Californians believe local schools should concentrate on a few basic courses rather than a wide variety.

El Camino Becomes Fundamental

During the fall of 1978 the San Juan Unified School District Board of Education expressed strong interest in basic education. They identified the development of a fundamental high school in the district as one of their immediate goals. Following extensive study and a series of public hearings, the board selected El Camino High School as the site for the "new" school. El Camino Fundamental High School opened in the fall of 1979 with 1450 students in grades nine through twelve, which is approximately the same number of students as the previous year.

Selection of Students and Staff

In order to accomplish the opening of the fundamental school, El Camino High School was closed at the end of the 1978-79 school year. The fundamental school was not to have a specific attendance area. Rather, it was open to any high school student within the San Juan District. In the spring of 1979, letters were sent to parents and students throughout the district to describe the new school. They were invited to meetings at which the school could be further explained and questions could be answered. Several meetings were also held for El Camino's current students and their parents to explain the options available to them.

All students who wished to attend the fundamental high school were required to complete an application for enrollment. The application, which included a statement of the school's commitment and student-parent commitment, also served as a "contract." Both the parent and the student were required to sign the

application (see appendix B). All students who made this commitment of effort were eligible to attend. The fundamental school then, did not select the student, the student selected the school.

As a result of this selection process, there was some change in the student body; however, over 80% of the students decided to continue to attend El Camino. At the beginning of the school year 42% of the freshman class were from outside the traditional El Camino attendance area. Fewer changes were made in the higher grades with 23% of the 10th grade students, 15% of the 11th grade students, and 11% of the 12th grade students transferring in. Several students living in El Camino's former attendance area who previously attended private schools also transferred to the fundamental school.

The teachers, too, volunteered to be at El Camino. Certificated staff members who agreed to a set of goals and teacher expectations for the fundamental school were interviewed. Overall, 95% of the staff remained at El Camino.

A Description of El Camino Fundamental High School

What is El Camino Fundamental High School? According to principal, Joseph E. Petterle, it is a school in which:

> . . . *students have made a commitment to learn.*
> . . . *teachers are committed to providing a strong background in basics.*
> . . . *the administration is committed to providing an environment in which learning will take place and students will succeed.*
> . . . *parents and community have made a commitment to be involved.*

El Camino is neither exclusively a college prep school nor a remedial school; it is comprised of students representing all ability levels. A goal of the staff is to help students reach out and perform at their maximum level of ability. As one step toward this end, a major focus at El Camino is to insist that students make an energetic and sincere effort. When a student's attempt is below standard, staff members work with the student and parents to bring the student's performance to an acceptable level.

Curriculum Changes

At El Camino, the classroom is the number one priority. Basic academic skills are stressed. All courses emphasize correct writing and speaking, and effective reading. Mathematical skills are also emphasized in classes other than mathematics. These fundamental or basic skills are the common thread uniting the total curriculum.

Curricular offerings at El Camino are essentially the same as they were during previous years. The curriculum is typical of high schools in the San Juan District. For example, students can select courses in industrial arts, fine and performing arts, foreign language, business, home economics, science, physical education, mathematics, English and social studies. In addition, El Camino supports the regional occupational program, outside work experience, and volunteers in education. The school also has a full program for students with special education needs.

Specifically, however, class offerings within departmental areas have been influenced by the transition of the school to the fundamental concept. Some departments have lost teaching periods while others have gained. (Some of the gain occurred because of changes in graduation requirements.) Several department chairpersons in elective areas have expressed concern with the reduced options to students in their departments. Business, home economics, and art currently have fewer course offerings than in the past. Further, foreign language department members expressed a concern that fewer freshman students enrolled in language courses. (They believe this is due, primarily, to an increase in the graduation requirement for science.) On the other hand, the departments of science, mathematics, English, and physical education have increased their courses or sections.

One significant change in the curriculum unique to El Camino High School is the development of a course called fundamental studies. The objective of the course is to teach students learning and study skills. The teachers then provide guided practice so students can learn to transfer those skills and techniques to other classes. The course became a popular elective and was taught each period of the day to a full classroom.

Although the curriculum has had some modifications, course content has essentially continued on the same path. (Many departments continually review and update content.) The major discernable difference is the change in teaching emphasis. Department chairs report that teachers are:

-expecting students to make practical applications of math and English skills,
-requiring more homework,
-using more means to assess student needs and progress,
-spending more time grading papers, including homework,
-spending more time preparing for class, and
-making more telephone calls to parents.

Department chairs also report that teachers are experiencing:

-fewer tardies and absences,
-more positive student/parent contacts,
-increased student interest,
-more demand for up-to-date library materials,
-greater diligence on the part of students, and
-more learning taking place.

Student Attendance Rates

El Camino's principal identified student attendance as an area of particular concern. He set a goal for the adminstration and staff to assist students to maintain a high level of attendance. The major approach used was increased personal contact between staff, students, and parents. Additional telephones were installed so teachers could more easily contact the homes of absent students. Attendance office personnel also made frequent and more immediate calls to verify reasons for absences.

The rate of student attendance at El Camino Fundamental High School did improve considerably over the previous year at El Camino. While absences due to illness increased by about 10% to 12%, absences for other reasons including truancy decreased by approximately 45% to 55%. The overall improved attendance pattern seems to be due both to a high level of student interest and to the concerted efforts of the school staff.

Student Characteristics - Previous Years

Students attending El Camino High School historically come from homes in which one or both parents have some college education. In fact, parents of El Camino students have an average educational level which is higher than parents in 89% of the high schools in California.*

El Camino students traditionally score high on achievement tests. On the 12th grade *California Assessment Program* (CAP) *Test* in 1978-79, El Camino students scored the same or higher than 82% of the schools in California in all areas tested and the same or higher than 93% in reading and written expression.

Students from El Camino typically score very high on the *Scholastic Achievement Test*. For example, the information on page 6 illustrates that the average scores for El Camino are superior to the district, state, and national scores in 1978-79.

As would be expected from the high test scores and parent educational level, at least 80% of El Camino's seniors have, in past years, indicated they plan to attend college.

*Data from 1979 *California Assessment Program* (CAP)

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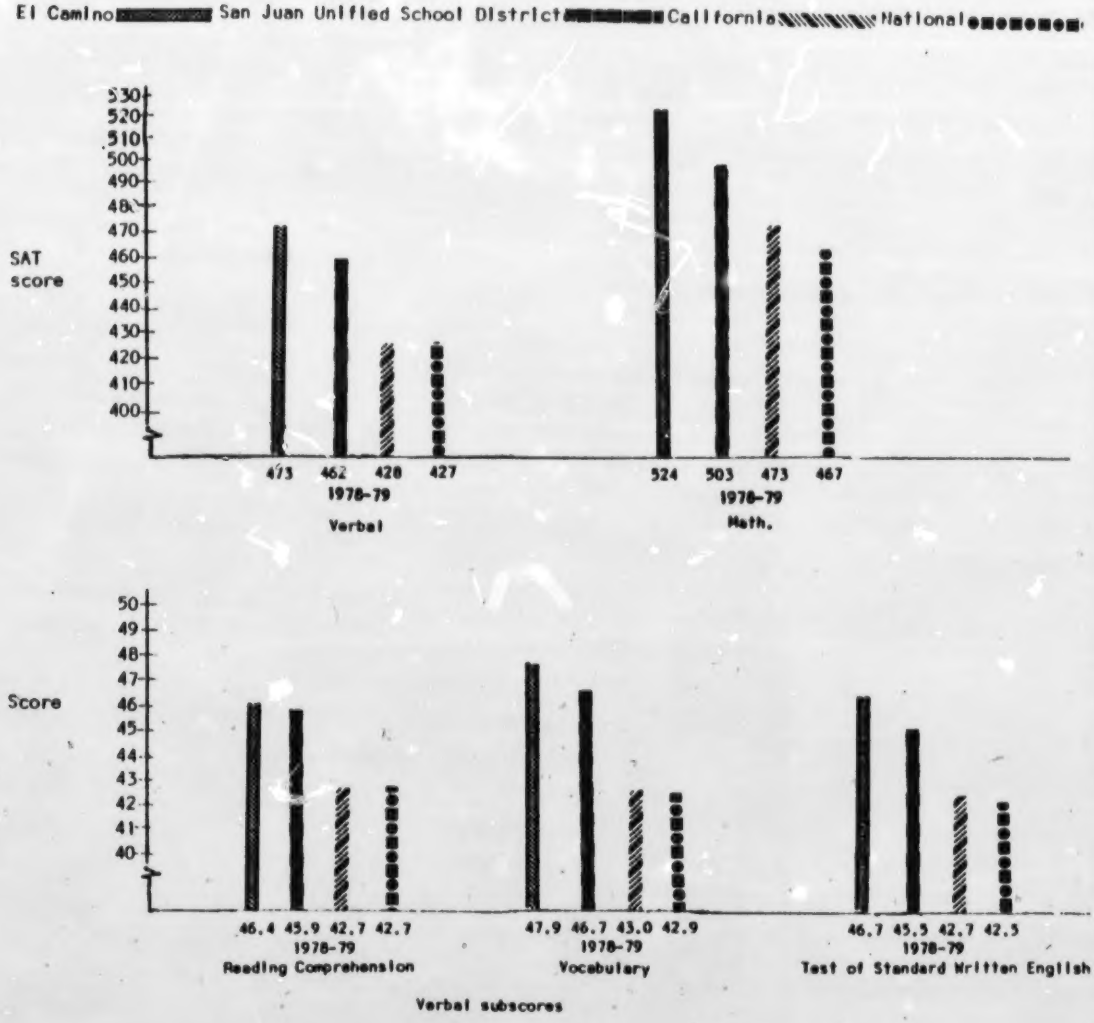
CHART

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS

HISTORICAL: 1978-79



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ACHIEVEMENT

During the spring 1980, 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students at El Camino were tested on academic measures. Twelfth grade students were tested on the state administered *California Assessment Program* (CAP) *Test* in December 1979. CAP test results will not be available until November 1980. Tenth grade students were examined on the state and district mandated minimum competency test in communication and computation. Ninth and 11th grade students were administered the *Tests of Achievement and Proficiency* (TAP), a nationally normed standardized test.

Minimum Competency Tests Results

During the 1979-80 school year, 80% of the 10th grade students passed both parts of the communication skills test (Part 1 is multiple choice measuring reading and writing skills and Part 2 is a writing sample). This is higher than the percent passing in the district, 77%, and higher than the percent passing at El Camino last year, 69%. On the Computational Skills Test which assesses basic math skills, 94% of El Camino's 10th graders passed compared to 90% passing in the district and 83%* passing at El Camino last year. These noticeable increases can probably be attributed to El Camino's emphasis on basic skills and high attendance rate.

Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP)

During the first year as a fundamental high school, 9th and 11th grade students at El Camino were administered the *Tests of Achievement and Proficiency* (TAP). This nationally normed test was considered because it is the high school extension of the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills* which is used in the district in grades 1 through 8.

The final decision to use the TAP was made after careful review and approval by the adminstration and faculty at El Camino. The six part test was administered over a two week period during the last week of April and the first week of May.

*In 1978-79, 9th grade students were administered the computational skills test and 83% passed at El Camino compared to 83% across the district.

Brief description of the test sections are provided below:

Reading Comprehension measures a student's understanding of passages similar to those assigned in social studies, literature, and the sciences, and materials - such as labels, advertisements, and newspapers.

Mathematics emphasizes the use of basic mathematics in managing the quantitative aspects of everyday living. The test also assesses a student's understanding of mathematical principles.

Written Expression measures a student's ability to express ideas in writing. The organization of ideas, letters, and themes, and the problems of word usage, word order, and punctuation are included in the test.

Using Sources of Information assesses a student's skill in obtaining information from maps, charts, tables, graphs, and common references such as dictionaries, tables of contents, and indexes. This test will indicate how well a student can act independently to locate and interpret information.

Social Studies tests both knowledge and skills in history, political science, geography, and other social sciences.

Science draws from the fields of biology, earth and space science, physics, and chemistry to measure a student's understanding of the concepts and techniques of science.

TAP Results

Summary test results on the TAP are presented on page 10 for 9th grade students and on page 11 for 11th grade students.

Ninth grade students at El Camino scored above average (median) in all content areas measured by the TAP. The highest areas with medians of 62 (compared to the norm of 50) were Mathematics and Written Expression. Areas close behind with medians of 61 were Reading Comprehension and Social Studies. The lowest area with a median of 55 was Using Sources of Information. A laudable percent of students scored above the 95th percentile in Mathematics, 11% compared to the expected 5%.

Eleventh grade students at El Camino also averaged above the national norm in all areas tested. The highest was social studies with a median score of 64 and the lowest was written expression at 54. Social studies also had a larger than expected percent of students scoring above the 95th percentile (12% compared to the expected 5%).

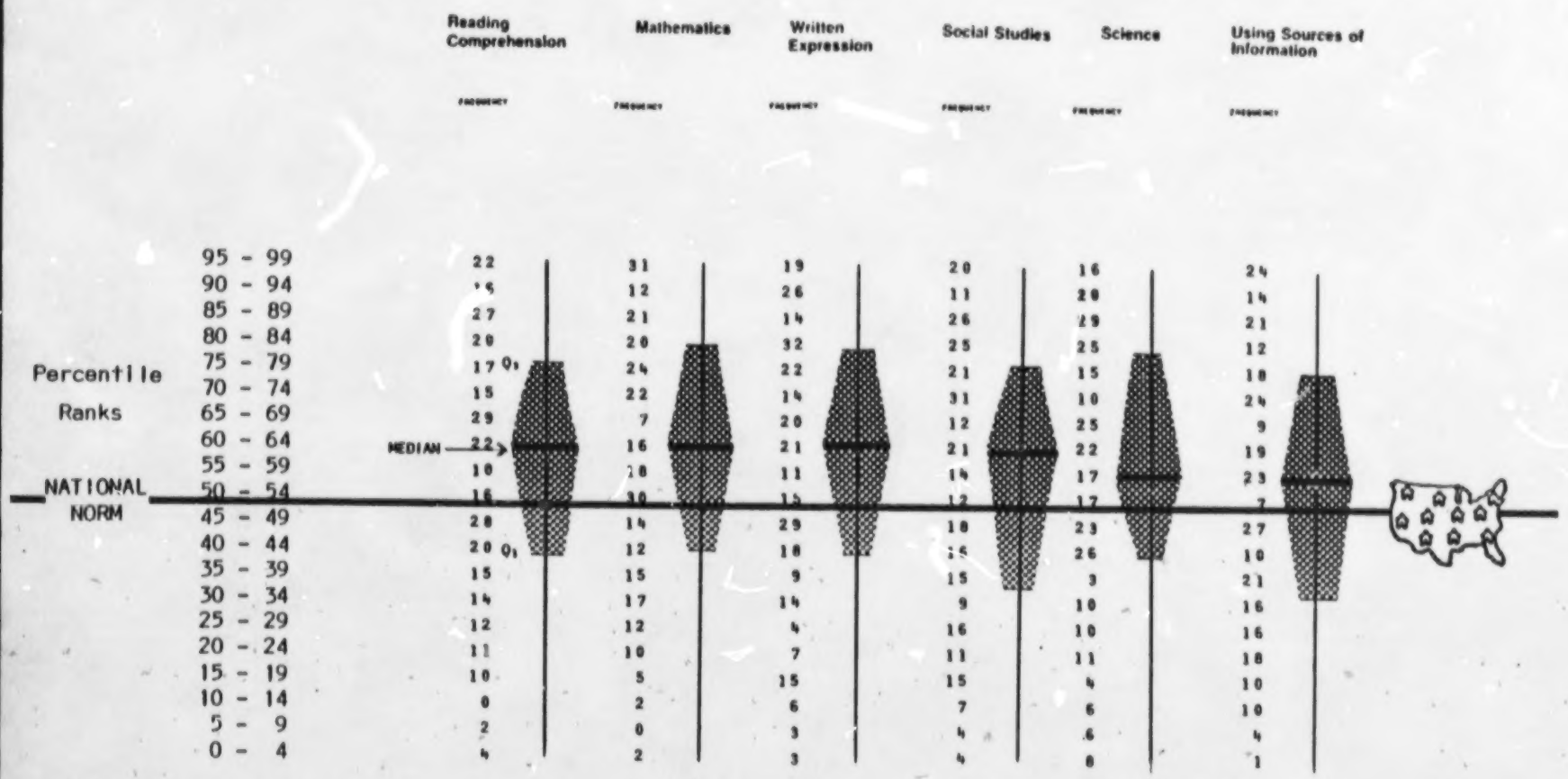
Since El Camino students have traditionally scored well on achievement tests, it cannot be determined whether the high test scores are different than they would have been if El Camino had not become a fundamental school. These scores will, however, be useful in future years to monitor change.

Achievement Summary

Overall, 9th and 11th grade students at El Camino performed well on the TAP. Tenth grade students had a higher passing rate this year on minimum competency tests than the district and higher than El Camino last year. These achievement test results indicate a strong academic program at El Camino.

Tests of Achievement & Proficiency

El Camino
grade 9
spring 1980



NUMBER	310	290	302	310	313	304
Q_3	78	81	81	79	80	77
MEDIAN	61	62	62	61	57	55
Q_1	40	41	42	35	40	34

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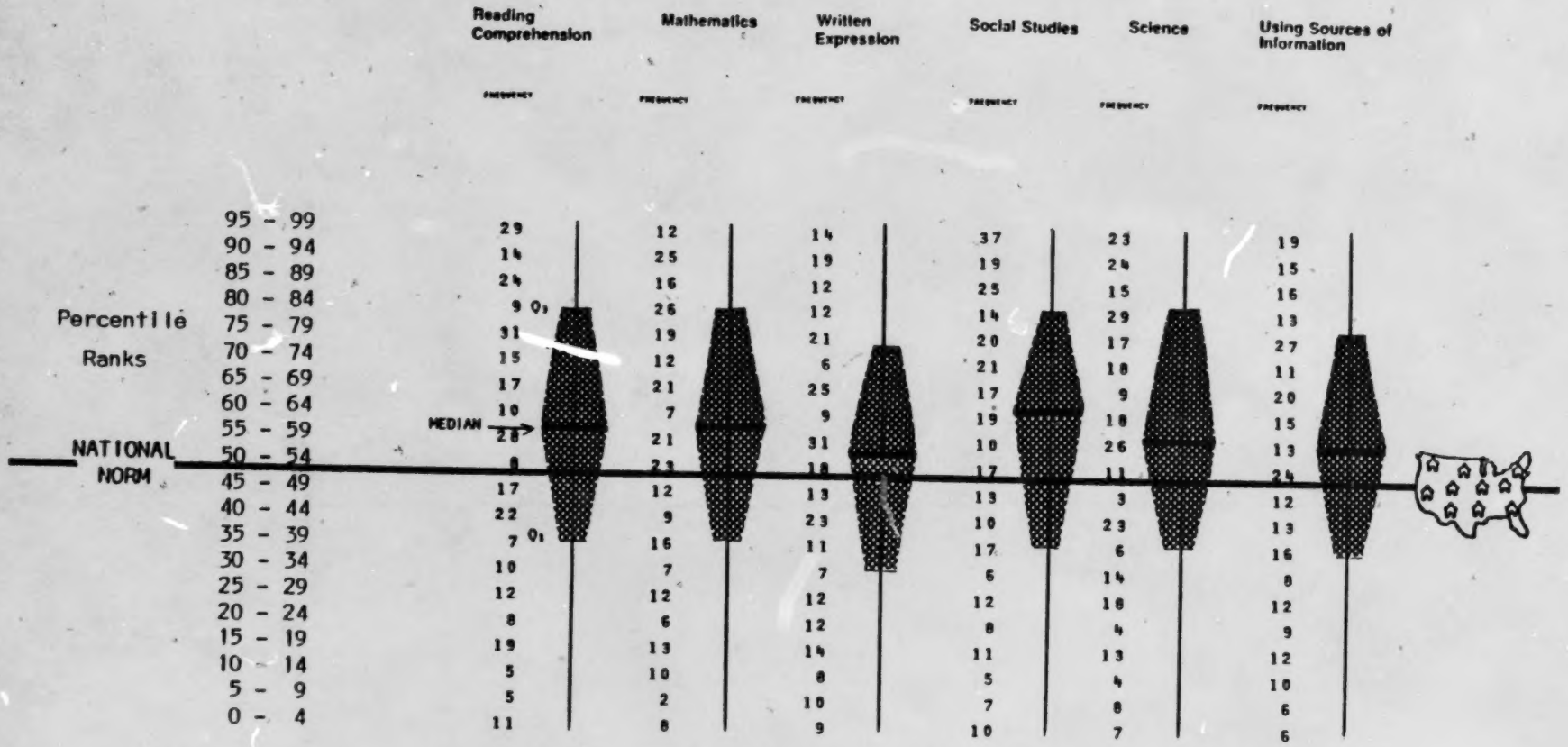
Research & Evaluation
T. Houseden, July 1980

Tests of Achievement & Proficiency

El Camino grade 11 spring 1980



	Reading Comprehension	Mathematics	Written Expression	Social Studies	Science	Using Sources of Information
NUMBER	301	277	286	298	290	277
Q_3	80	80	74	82	82	78
MEDIAN	58	59	54	64	58	56
Q_1	36	36	33	36	37	35

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Research & Evaluation
T. Houston, July 1980

ATTITUDE

An attitude survey conducted in May included students, staff and a 20% sample of parents from El Camino. Separate surveys were prepared for each group. The parent survey was mailed to the student's home and a postage paid return envelope was enclosed. Overall, 45% of the parents who were mailed surveys returned them. Eighty-two percent of the students completed the student surveys and 87% of the certificated staff returned their surveys.

A breakdown of the characteristics of survey respondents is provided in appendix A, on page A16. All subgroups appear to be represented. It is interesting to note that 94% of the parents returning the survey hope their child will attend a college or university and 80% of the students have these plans. Summaries of the questionnaire data and comments are provided in appendix A, pages A1 to A15.

PARENT SURVEYS

In general, parents who returned the questionnaires were very supportive of El Camino and the changes made in the 1979-80 school year. Parents were asked to assign El Camino a grade of "A", "B", "C", "D", or "F". Twenty-five percent gave El Camino an "A". This compares favorably to the 12% "A"s given to schools by public school parents in the 1979 national gallup poll.

GRADE ASSIGNED BY PARENTS

	A	B	C	D or F
El Camino Parents	25%	56%	17%	3%
Public School Parents (1979 Gallup Poll)	12%	37%	31%	20%

In more specific areas, parents tended to indicate that the coursework was harder and their children had more homework than in the previous year. Parents were very supportive of the new school rules such as closed campus, no smoking, dress code, and school discipline. In addition they saw these rules as being enforced most of the time. A problem area identified by some parents was enforcement of the no smoking rules, especially in the bathrooms. Another area of concern identified by parents was the counseling program. Thirty-four percent of the parents indicated considerable or great need for improvement in the way El Camino staff advise students. Most instructional areas were rated by parents as effective or very effective. The only subject areas which tended to be considered somewhat effective or ineffective were home economics and music.

STUDENT SURVEYS

Student ratings of El Camino tended to be lower than the ratings given by parents or staff. When asked to assign El Camino a grade, only 4% selected an "A". Forty-two percent of the students gave El Camino a "B", 36% gave it a "C", and 17% gave it a "D" or "F". Students tended to have positive attitudes toward El Camino's teachers and counselors but less positive attitudes toward administrators. The major objections listed by students were closed campus and strict rules. Another area of concern was the availabilility and choice of counselors. Some students felt that a few teachers needed to be replaced and that too much homework was assigned. Sixty percent indicated they had a lot of homework; 56% felt the coursework was harder; and 44% said they learned more than in the previous year. The majority of students felt that the school rules were frequently or always enforced (such as closed campus, no smoking, dress code, and discipline). However, comments made by students were overwhelmingly against closed campus and dress code. Students were also critical of school activities, sports, and student government. In the instructional areas, students gave high ratings to physical education, literature, and science. They gave low effectiveness ratings to home economics and music.

General comments from students were both positive and negative. Many saw El Camino's first year as good and improving. The primary objections listed by students were the new rules imposed.

STAFF SURVEYS

Staff members tended to give El Camino the highest ratings of the three groups surveyed. Thirty-eight percent gave El Camino an "A" for its first year and 58% gave it a "B". Ninety-nine percent indicated a positive or very positive attitude toward El Camino and 100% had positive attitudes toward students. Critical comments were in the areas of teacher communication with administration and a need for the total staff to consistently enforce the school rules. One problem identified was the high stress levels among staff members.

Staff members were especially supportive of the basic skill areas and saw them as effective. However, several felt that the course offerings were too restricted. Staff, parent, and student groups all tended to feel the buildings, grounds, and classrooms could use improvement.

Staff members were asked to compare El Camino's first year as a fundamental school to its previous year. Most saw a dramatic improvement.

For example:

STAFF RESPONSES

Percent Agreeing	
87%	Students are more interested in learning
83%	More students complete their assignments
62%	Students study skills are better
87%	Students have a better attitude toward school
80%	Parent support is stronger

APPENDIX A

ATTITUDE SURVEY RESULTS

	Page
Grade for El Camino	
Chart	A1
Parents' and students' opinions about change	
Chart	A2
Attitude toward El Camino, staff and students	
Chart	A3
Comments	A4
Attitude toward school rules	
Chart	A5
Comments	A6
Attitude toward school procedures and appearance	
Chart	A7
Comments	A8
Attitude toward instructional areas	
Chart	A9
Comments	A10
Attitude toward school activities	
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Parents attitudes toward school personnel	
Chart	A12
Staff's opinions about change	
Chart	A13
Comments	A14
General comments from survey	
Comments	A15
Characteristics of survey respondents	
Table	A16

APPENDIX B

EL CAMINO AGREEMENT FORMS

Student application	B1
Goals and teacher expectations, and agreement form	B2-5

Number of Surveys	
Parent	122
Student	1,079
Staff	72

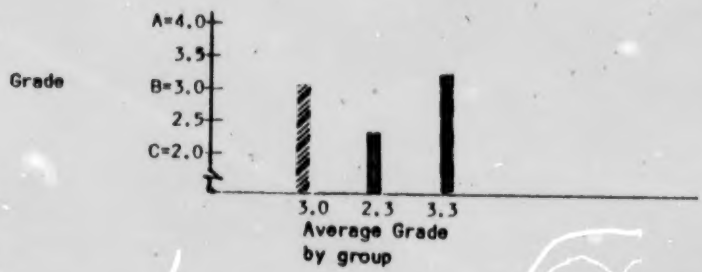
CHART

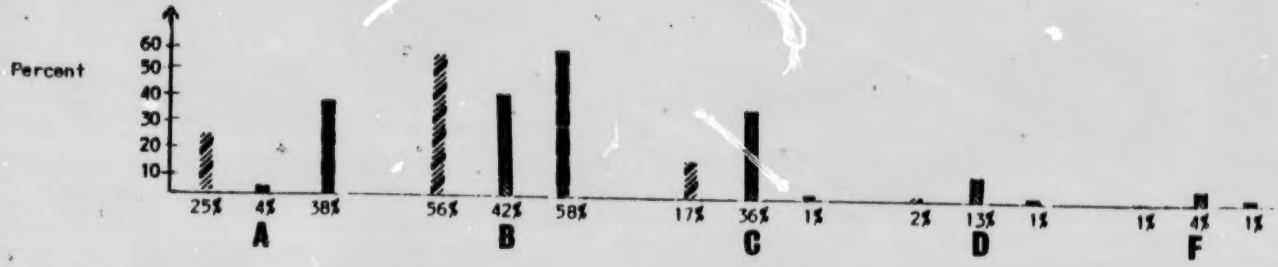
GRADE FOR EL CAMINO

OVERALL, I WOULD GIVE EL CAMINO A GRADE OF:

A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0

Parent Student Staff



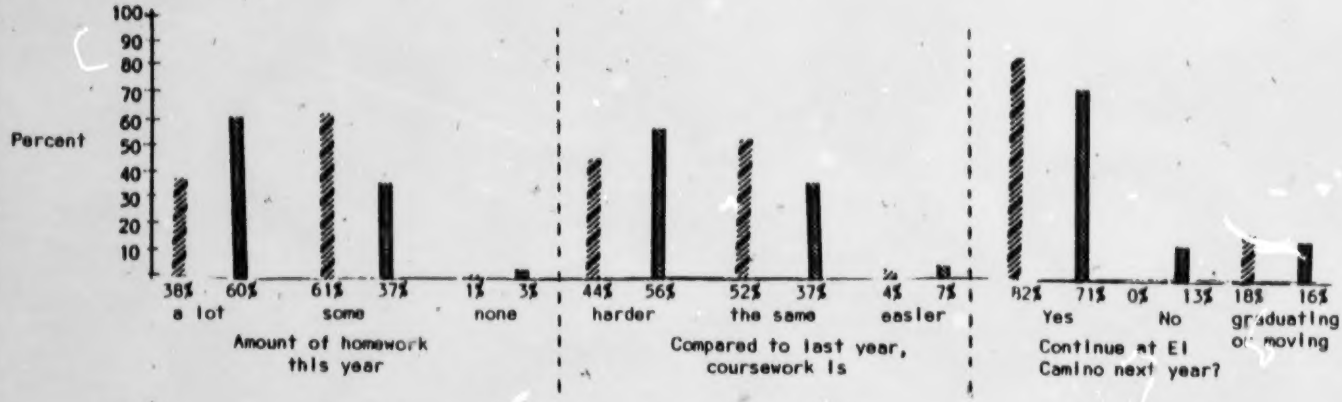


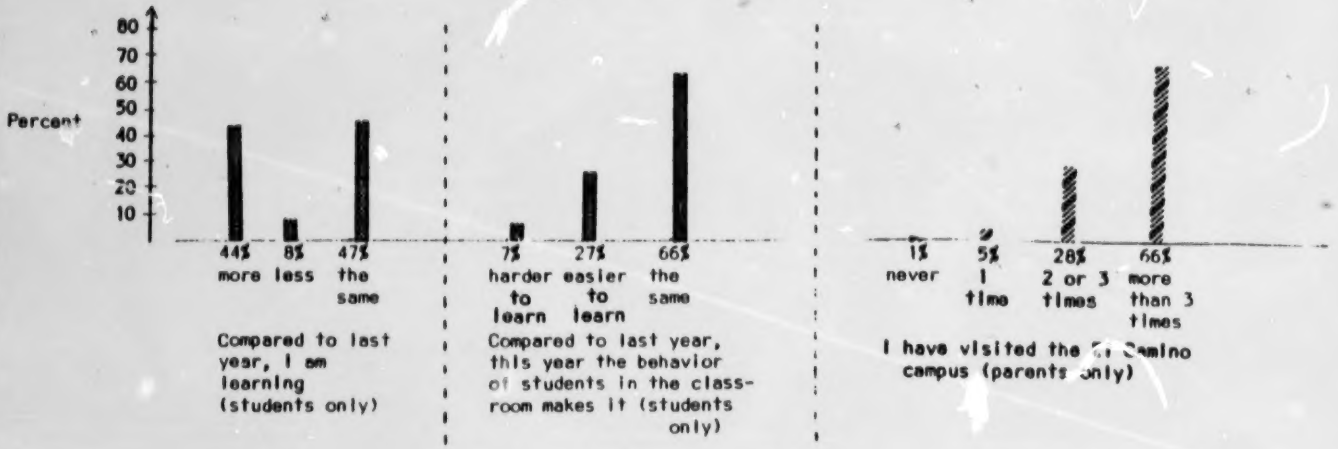
CHART

PARENTS' & STUDENTS' OPINIONS ABOUT CHANGE

RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

Parent ▨ Student ▨



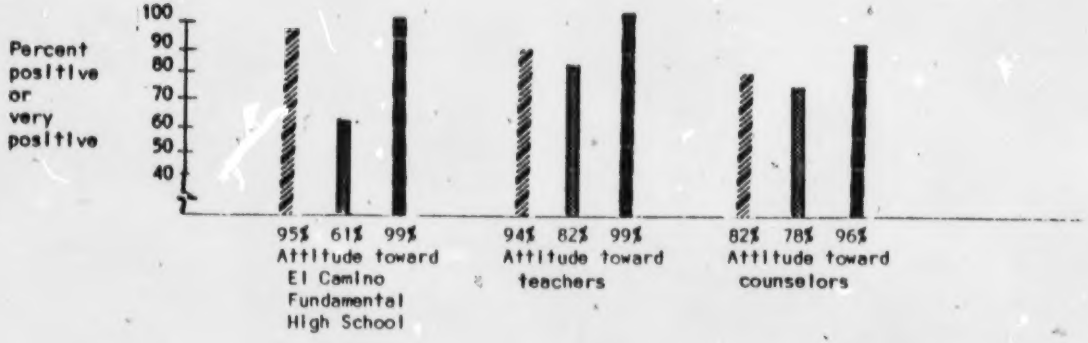

Percent
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
44% 8% 47%
more less the same
Compared to last year, I am learning (students only)
7% 27% 66%
harder to learn easier to learn the same
Compared to last year, this year the behavior of students in the classroom makes it (students only)
1% 5% 28% 66%
never 1 time 2 or 3 times more than 3 times
I have visited the El Camino campus (parents only)

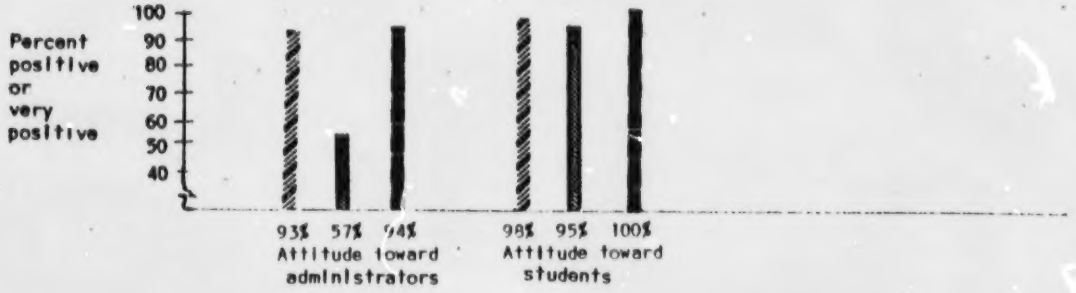
CHART

ATTITUDE TOWARD EL CAMINO, STAFF AND STUDENTS

Question: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT ATTITUDE IN EACH AREA BELOW?

Parents Students Staff





COMMENTS

ATTITUDE TOWARD EL CAMINO, STAFF AND STUDENTS

PARENTS - 29% commented

In addition to positive and negative comments, there were also several of a more neutral nature. Regarding the school, two comments were positive, two were neutral, and four were negative. The number of comments related to teachers, counselors, and administrators were nearly equal. There were four positive comments about teachers and three for both counselors and administrators. Teachers and administrators received two neutral comments while counselors received three. And, teachers and counselors received seven negative comments and administrators received six.

Sample comments:

Much improved considering age of facility.

Appearance of El Camino is always neat.. but could use paint and clean up in burn area.

Need paint and color - drab - shabby - dirty - unkept.

On the whole, I have heard good reports on most teachers.

Wish there were a way to get rid of "tenured" ineffective teachers.

Very positive attitude toward most teachers and counselors.

More time with counselors, but that may be our fault and not counselors.

Counseling is somewhat weak, not enough positive recommendations and advice to students.

I think the administrators are excellent.

Never had any contact with administrators.

Administrators are ineffective.

STAFF - 19% commented

Of the written comments made, three were positive about administrators. El Camino, counselors, and students, each received one positive comment. On the other hand, seven negative comments were written about administrators, four about counselors and two about teachers.

Sample comments:

Students were dealt with much quicker than in the past.

The total staff has shown an effective team effort in offering an exemplary education and have worked to maintain a consistently controlled environment.

Administration did a good job.

Stress is high!!! How to deal with!!!

We need more communication. Some students are manipulating the system. All support personnel need to communicate in a group meeting so the left hand knows what the right hand is doing.

Counselors spend too much time academic counseling and scheduling - not enough time on emotional stress.

Believe counselors were not available for student problems.

My attitude toward administrators would be very positive if they considered teacher input more positively.

More stress this year!!!

STUDENTS - 30% commented

Both positive and negative comments about the school were made by students at all grade levels. Several students simply stated that they liked El Camino. Other students felt that the school has improved and some voiced pride in the school. The majority of those who wrote negative comments indicated that the school rules are too strict and that there is little personal freedom for students. Further, several students object of the word "fundamental."

A few students wrote positive remarks about individual teachers, counselors and administrators. Most students who commented, however, wrote about each group collectively. While several remarks were positive, the majority were critical. The positive comments ranged from "o.k." to "have been very helpful". The critical remarks were somewhat more specific. For example, several students feel that teachers do not have a personal interest in their students. Students also feel that teachers assign excessive homework and that several are not well qualified as teachers. A number of students believe that counselors are not well informed and that they do not take enough time to help students with their problems. Some students would like to be able to choose their own counselors. Several respondents stated that administrators are impersonal and not friendly. They believe that administrators are "too tight" and place more emphasis upon discipline than they do upon the curriculum and learning.

Few students commented about other students. Of those who did, three felt there were student cliques while five felt that students were nicer than students they had known previously.

Sample comments:

I'm especially pleased with a more positive atmosphere at school.

I really like this school. It has a lot of potential and it can be made better if everyone helps.

Too strict - can't seem to find time for us morons.

The attitude I have towards El Camino is that they treat you like it's a prison.

I like El Camino a lot, but I don't like the word fundamental in there.

I have a different attitude for each teacher, counselor, or administrator. Some are very helpful, some aren't.

The teachers give way too much homework. I stay up till 3am doing homework.

I think the school should get rid of some teachers for the sake of the students. Their teaching abilities are very poor.

This school could still be good like it is now if we just didn't have so much pressure from teachers.

Counselors should have more time for the students themselves and their problems instead of always classes problems.

We should get pick of counselors!

Administrators are too tight.

The administrators are not friendly in the halls, etc.

Administrators worry too much about discipline instead of the students need for a good education.

Students are not friendly to most people except in their clicks.

The kids are pretty nice at El Camino.

CHART

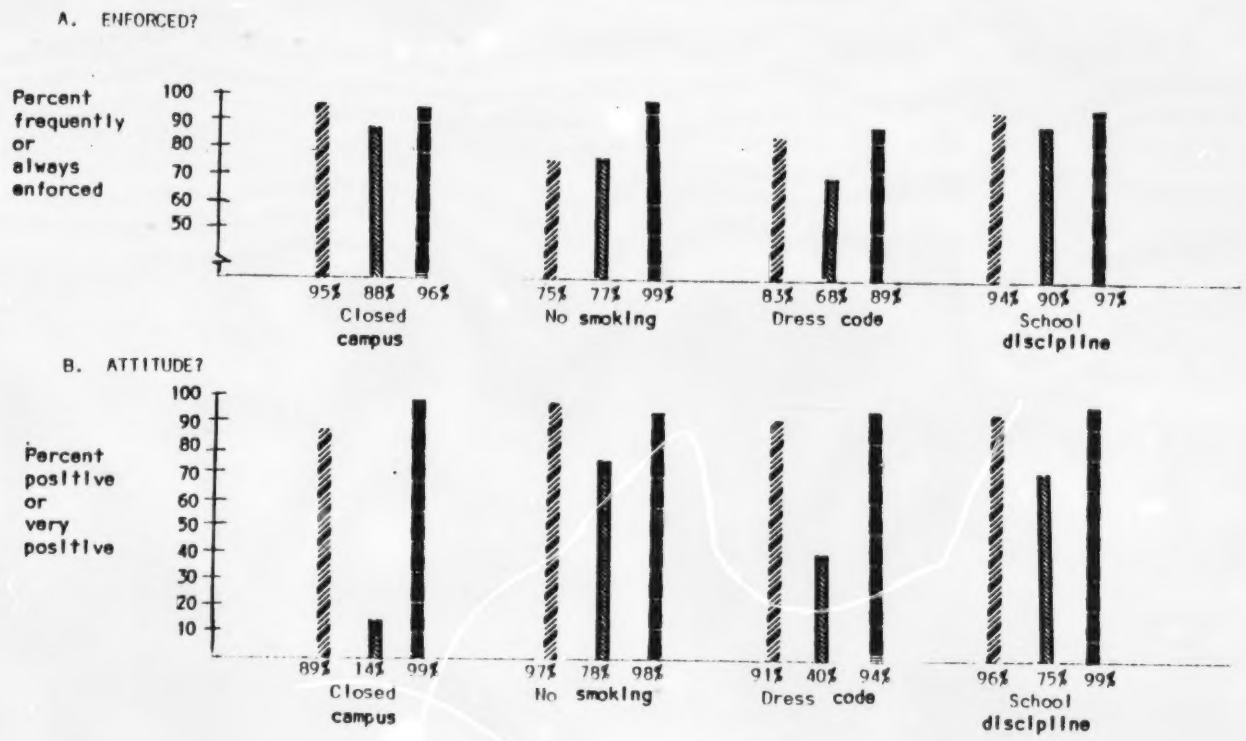
ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL RULES

RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO INDICATE WHETHER THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WERE ENFORCED FAIRLY/AND ALSO THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE RULES.

A. Enforced?: Percent selecting frequently or always enforced.

B. Attitude?: Percent selecting positive or very positive.

Parents Students Staff



COMMENTS

ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL RULES

PARENTS - 29% commented

Parents were asked about whether the rules relating to closed campus, no smoking on campus, dress code, and school discipline were fairly enforced. Nine did not believe the no smoking rule was being enforced (particularly in the bathrooms), five comments were related to non-enforcement of the dress code, four to open campus and five to discipline. In this section, only one comment, supporting enforcement of rules, was considered positive.

Sample comments:

Instead of smoking confined to smoking areas which our son can avoid, it is moved into bathrooms which he cannot avoid.

Enforcement of dress code is not consistent.

See no real need for a closed campus.

Not as strong as one is led to believe with school discipline.

Rules should be strongly enforced.

STAFF - 18% commented

In general, staff felt that the rules needed to be consistently enforced.

Sample comments:

Consistency among teachers!!!

Total staff does not support these rules. Those that do are resented.

We need to continue to be united in what we expect.

Perhaps 5 or 10 minutes added to lunch will help lunch run smoothly.

Smoking in bathroom is getting bad again.

STUDENTS - 45% commented

Students at each grade level, both male and female, overwhelmingly support the concept of open campus. No student wrote a positive statement about closed campus. Numerous students also asked for a longer lunch period. That request was frequently in context with a request for an open campus. However, many students did not relate the two. Some merely asked for an extended lunch, varying from 10 minutes to 30 minutes longer. One student suggested extending the school day to make up for a longer lunch period.

Students at all grade levels also supported a relaxation of the dress code. While no one was supportive of the dress code, several felt that if there must be a code, it should be better enforced.

Another item in which there was general agreement among students was the rule prohibiting smoking on campus. The majority of students who commented believe that smoking in the bathrooms has become a significant problem. While some students felt that smokers should not be allowed to attend El Camino, most felt that a smoking area should be reinstated. Several students remarked about the enforcement of rules. Many felt that the enforcement was too strict, while others felt the enforcement was either unfair or not consistent.

Sample comments:

I feel the campus should be open during lunch. There is no need for it to be closed. It doesn't discipline the kids that are good - they just lose out.

Very against closed campus!!!

I hate the lunches. You don't have enough time to eat.

I think there should be an open campus. Why should everybody stay here when lunch time is here. Lunch here is pretty boring. Can we have open campus?

Dress code too strict. Slack off.

If you have a rule stated, it really isn't a rule until you make people follow it, such as dress code.

I think smoking on campus should be closely watched, especially in the bathroom. I don't like to go into a bathroom filled with smoke.

I am only against smoking in the bathrooms. A certain area for smoking would be nice.

School discipline is often too harsh for what student's did.

I feel some of the aspects to these rules are too petty and can be too variable according to the administrator in charge.

Sometimes a little bit too strict for minor offenses!

CHART

ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND APPEARANCE

RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO INDICATE THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FOLLOWING AREAS BY RESPONDING TO TWO QUESTIONS.

A. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH EL CAMINO IN EACH AREA LISTED BELOW?

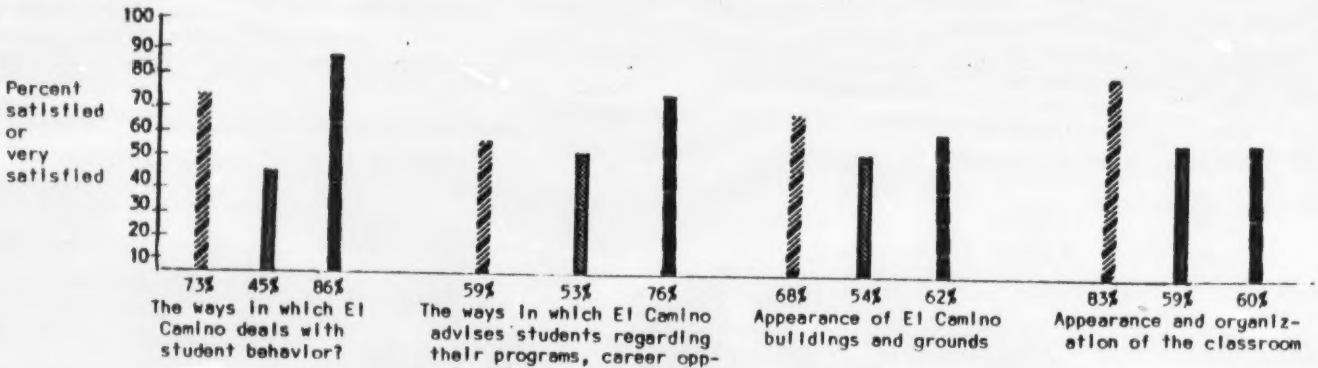
Percent selecting satisfied or very satisfied.

B. HOW MUCH NEED IS THERE FOR EL CAMINO TO IMPROVE IN EACH AREA LISTED BELOW?

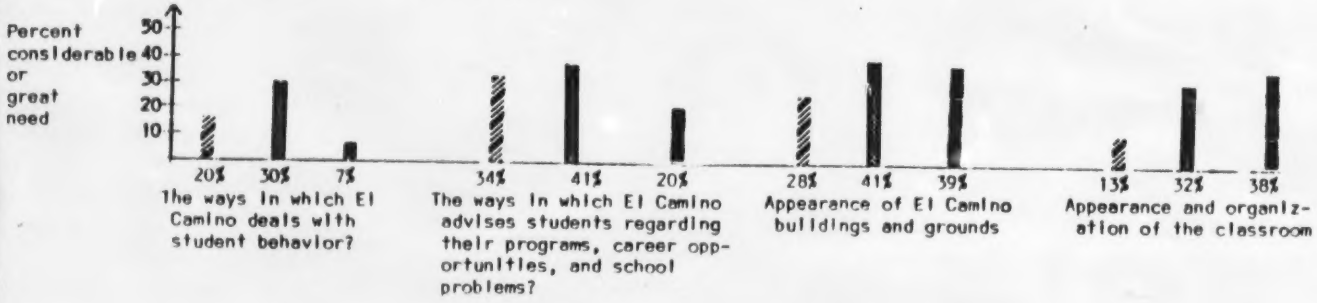
Percent indicating considerable or great need.

Parent ▨ Student ▨ Staff ▨

A. SATISFIED?



B. IMPROVEMENT NEEDED?


Percent considerable or great need
50
40
30
20
10
20% 30% 7%
The ways in which El Camino deals with student behavior?
34% 41% 20%
The ways in which El Camino advises students regarding their programs, career opportunities, and school problems?
28% 41% 39%
Appearance of El Camino buildings and grounds
13% 32% 38%
Appearance and organization of the classroom

COMMENTS

ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND APPEARANCE

PARENTS - 30% commented

Parents had eight negative and four positive comments toward the appearance of El Camino's building and grounds. In the area of advising students, nine parents indicated a need for improvement. Three parents gave negative comments about student discipline.

Sample comments:

School's much neater.

Need air circulation.

Paint the school a different color.

I know it is a big job, but how about the weeds along Eastern. Those work-study children could pull weeds?

No one should ever stop trying to improve.

We were unimpressed with the advice & interest.

Student behavior was handled very poorly.

Haven't upheld rules.

STAFF - 25% commented

Staff members were asked about their satisfaction with and/or need for improvement in student behavior (one positive, six negative), student advising (two positives, three negative), appearance of classrooms (four negative), the sports program (five negative), student activities (six negative), and student government (two positive, four negative).

Representative comments:

More emphasis on reasonable politeness from students.

Continue to improve efforts with student advising. Not enough time given to help with emotional problems.

Big improvement in school appearance.

Classrooms need new desks, paint, storage units.

It seems our coaches do not display an open attitude or provide encouragement to all students in sports.

Student activities should expand to involve more students.

Student government did a good job, but communicates with only small portion of students.

STUDENTS - 25% commented

Although students seem supportive of discipline in general, many feel it is too harsh for the offense committed. Some students also spoke against other students "being made an example of."

Some students felt they had been given good advice concerning their programs. Several, however, felt career-related advice was weak and that career counselors are difficult to contact.

Three or four respondents felt the appearance of the school has improved. Numerous respondents, however, strongly dislike the color of the buildings. Very few commented on the appearance of classrooms. Those who wrote about the sports program were somewhat negative. They were particularly critical of the emphasis, including money, placed on the major sports of football and basketball. Several students asked for a girls soccer team. Some students were supportive of spring sports.

Numerous students felt there were not enough student activities. They would like more dances. Several would like more rallies although some of them believe rallies are too repetitive and boring. They would like more student involvement. Many requested that rallies not be mandatory.

A number of students supported student government, but many others criticized the lack of information from student government to the student body.

Sample comments:

Is using students as examples right?

Counselors proved to be very helpful to students this year.

This year career counseling was not too good.

We're looking good.

I hate the color of the school.

More support for other sports instead of football. It's a losing cause.

Need girl's soccer teams.

El Camino activities this year have been terrible. There weren't many dances, and the rallies were too short and boring.

The reason I gave the rallies dissatisfied was because it's the same thing over and over again.

Very few things that Student Government does are ever recognized, and they need to be.

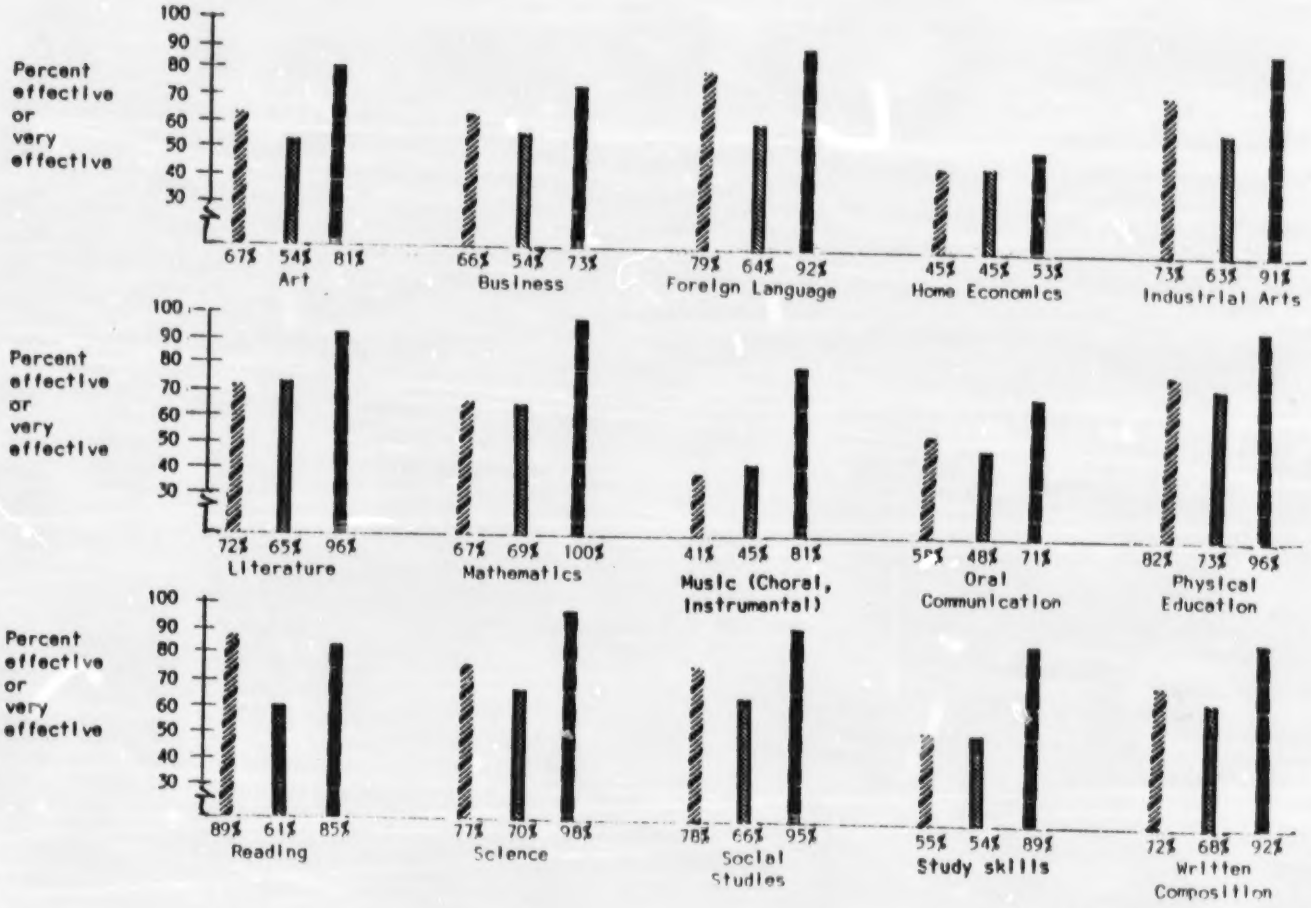
Never hear what the student government is doing.

CHART

ATTITUDE TOWARD INSTRUCTIONAL AREAS

Question: HOW EFFECTIVE HAS EL CAMINO BEEN THIS YEAR IN PROVIDING INSTRUCTION IN THE AREAS LISTED BELOW.

Parents Students Staff



COMMENTS

ATTITUDE TOWARD INSTRUCTIONAL AREAS

PARENTS - 33% commented

When asked about how effective El Camino had been in providing instruction in particular subjects and skills, twelve identified specific areas in which instruction was effective, while twenty-four stated instruction was not effective in certain areas. More specifically, four parents wrote positive comments about particular classes, while nine wrote negative comments. One person was complementary about the teaching of skills (writing, reading and/or study skills) while twelve were critical. Six comments were positive toward the teaching staff and sixteen were negative.

Sample comments:

Written Composition - Good

Students still need more work on study skills and more reading emphasis.

Would like to see an English composition course be required for all students. Feel majority of students lack composition skills.

Great teacher staff.

My student has learned and enjoyed.

Need to weed out incompetent teachers soon.

STAFF - 25% commented

The staff was also asked their opinion about how effective El Camino had been in meeting student's needs; particularly in the curriculum and skills areas. Twenty-six respondents wrote comments stating that the school was not meeting student's needs in art (six comments); business and home economics (five comments); music and reading (three comments); and industrial arts and public speaking (two comments). The statements were overwhelmingly pointed toward a lack of offerings in the subjects mentioned.

Sample comments:

Limited offerings.

Few offerings.

Need more sections for student participation.

Not enough course offerings.

This is a fundamental school not a college prep. All areas of the curriculum need to be stressed equally.

We need to move as an entire school unit.

STUDENTS - 24% commented

Relatively few students responded with written statements when asked how effective instruction had been in all subject areas and in certain skill areas. Of those who did respond, about thirty felt their instruction had been good and about forty-five felt it had not. Some departments were identified more frequently than were others. For example, three students were positive about their science courses but eight were critical. The most frequent criticism was that excessive homework interfered with other courses and with their life at home. Five students were positive about social studies while four were negative. Nine students stated they had learned a lot in English, particularly written composition, while eight said they had not. Two students felt they had good instruction in math while seven were critical of the instruction. Two people were pleased with their foreign language course while four people in advanced languages wrote negative comments.

Few other comments were made. Four people were disappointed with the radio class and three people asked to have electronics reinstated.

Music received two positive and two negative comments and home economics received two positive comments. Several students felt that student teachers do not belong in a fundamental school while two wrote very positive statements about one student teacher. Many students asked that homework be better coordinated. They asked that major assignments not be given by different departments at the same time. Others said that the volume of homework was too great.

CHART

ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

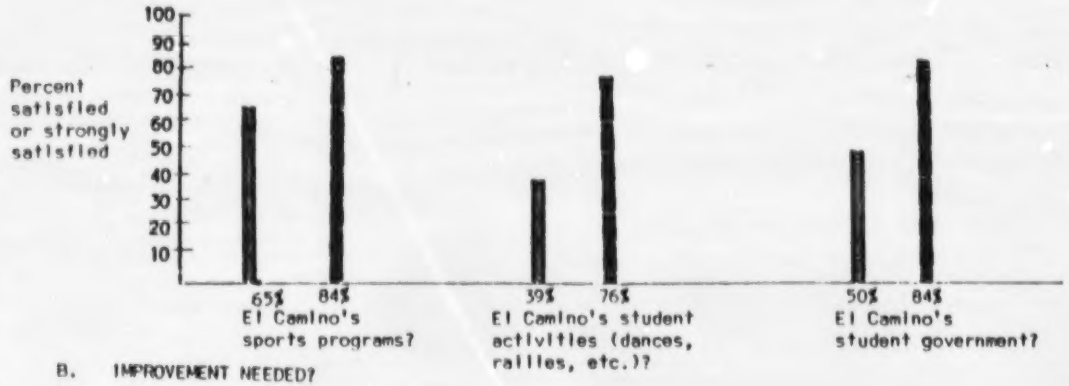
RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO INDICATE THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FOLLOWING AREAS BY RESPONDING TO TWO QUESTIONS.

A. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH EL CAMINO IN EACH AREA LISTED BELOW?
Percent selecting satisfied or strongly satisfied.

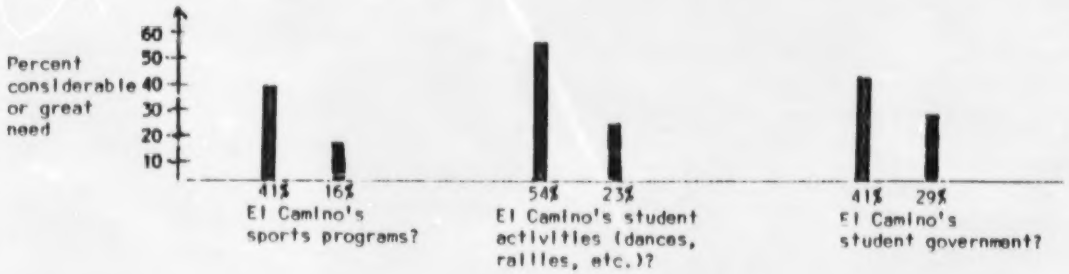
B. HOW MUCH NEED IS THERE FOR EL CAMINO TO IMPROVE IN EACH AREA LISTED BELOW?
Percent indicating considerable or great need.

Student ▒▒▒▒ Staff ▒▒▒▒

A. SATISFIED?



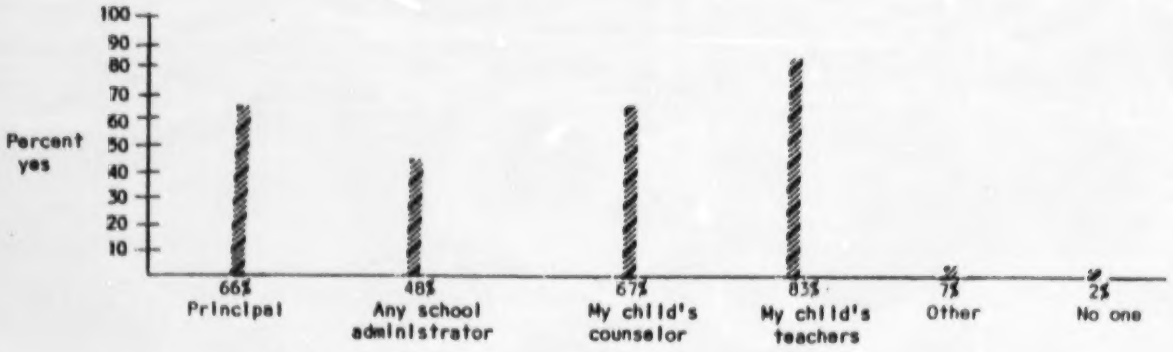
B. IMPROVEMENT NEEDED?



CHART

PARENTS ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Question for Parents only: IF I HAVE A QUESTION OR PROBLEM CONCERNING MY CHILD AT EL CAMINO, I WOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE CONTACTING:

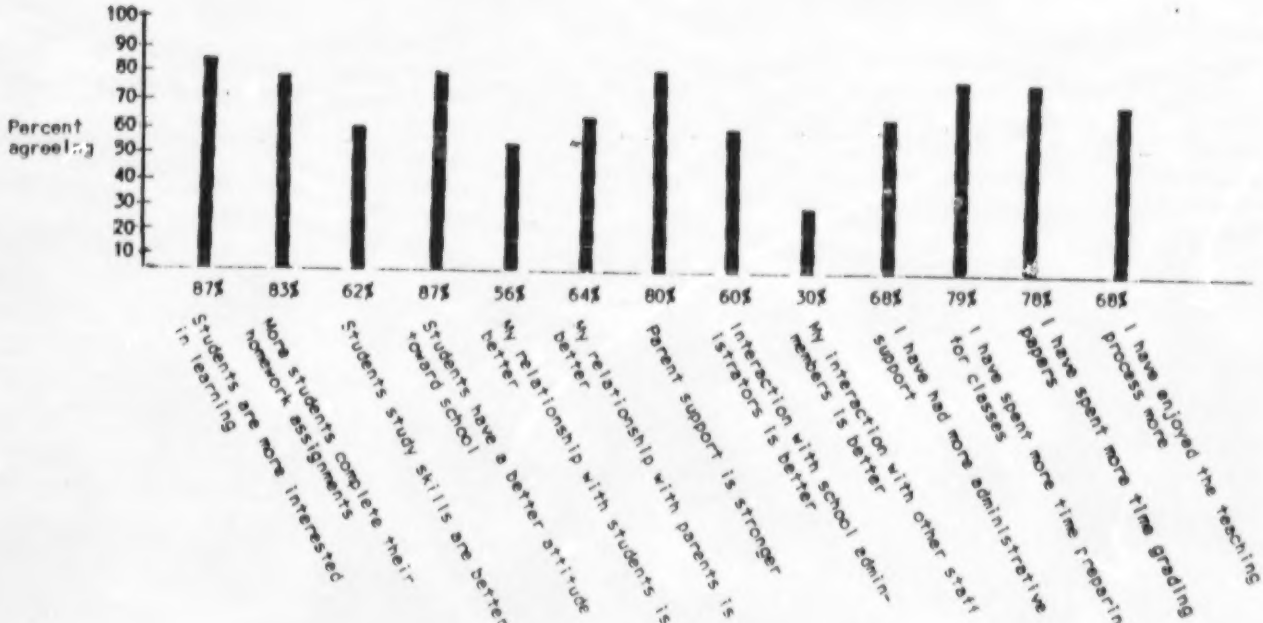


CHART

STAFF'S OPINIONS ABOUT CHANGE

Question for staff only: WHEN COMPARING EL CAMINO LAST YEAR TO THIS YEAR, THIS YEAR:

PERCENT AGREEING



COMMENTS

STAFF'S OPINIONS ABOUT CHANGE

STAFF - 8% commented

Staff who had worked at El Camino previously were asked to compare the 1978-79 school year with the 1979-80 year. Only eight respondents made comments.

Sample comments:

Regarding student interest in learning - *We still have quite a number of students who do not want to be here or to work very hard. Some are but many are not.*

Regarding relationships with students and parents - *My relationships with students and parents has always been good.*

Regarding interaction of school administrators - *The school functions more smoothly but interaction with administrators is one way only and that is a great disappointment. It affects answers to other questions especially about my enjoyment of the teaching process. Always positive before El Camino was fundamental.*

Regarding interaction with other staff members - *Difficult to stay in touch due to split lunch service.*

Regarding student attitude - *This varies greatly with the student population.*

Regarding enjoyment of the teaching process - *Always positive before El Camino was fundamental school. Always enjoyed it. Yes and No...the frustration of so much paperwork and of trying to cover all bases, spending so much time on the phone with parents, trying to cope with students with poor study habits who seem to be here because their parents sent them, leaves me exhausted and with no time for anything but school which is bad for me as an individual and for the class. I'm tired.*

COMMENTS

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM SURVEY

PARENT - 80% commented

The majority of the general comments about the fundamental school were positive. Of those who responded, sixty were strongly positive while twelve made negative comments.

Sample comments:

Having had children at El Camino both before and after the fundamental set up, I can only say it's a great improvement. My youngest at El Camino is a bit of a handful and the teachers have managed to both control and understand and help him! Hats off and congratulations to the staff.

The change in her attitude toward school. It is remarkable. It has taken the full year - but math grades were "F" first semester - she got an "A" on her last test. She is learning how to study. But more important she's learning the need to discipline herself. We both know now she could never go back to her old school. Thank you!!

I am very pleased and I strongly endorse the fundamental philosophy! There are weaknesses and "rough spots" which need to be ironed out. However, we are still very satisfied and feel the fundamental school is providing a much better education for our daughter than other public schools.

We have been extremely pleased with our daughters progress this year and she has been much happier under the stricter codes. We feel more secure with the closer observations of what the students are doing. We also feel that having to study a little harder has been good for her.

Education-wise, I can see no improvement. As the parent of three gifted children, California is a great disappointment in supplying hard classes for children with above average intelligence.

When we moved to the Sacramento area we studied the schools carefully and chose to buy a home in the El Camino district. We are very disappointed that El Camino went fundamental. The fundamental school is for undermotivated students with over motivated parents. Our problem is we have an overmotivated son who wants to go to a good university.

STAFF - 63% commented

According to the general comments made, the majority of the staff is positive about El Camino. Nineteen repondents wrote positive statements; twenty wrote positive statements and included comments regarding areas needing improvement; and six wrote negative statements. Specifically, eight positive comments were made about the school principal. The administration, counselors, students, and student attendance each received five positive comments. Two people also wrote in a complementary manner about teachers and parents.

Representative comments:

The fundamental high school is a roaring success because the mood of the entire school community has been altered to focus on instruction. The instructional program is lively, diverse and challenging. So the "putting on" of structure has not made the classroom repressive. It has actually helped to open classroom vistas.

Great attitude by principal. He is El Camino Fundamental High School.

Excellent change. Excellent students, attendance and therefore more learning.

The rules need to be enforced more effectively.

Weak areas - not enough consistencies among teachers for support of rules.

Of those staff members who made recommendations for change, ten felt there was little or no teacher input in decision-making, and four felt the teacher workload was excessive. Five respondents felt that staff relationships between teachers and administrators should be improved. Two also stated that teacher-teacher relationships were difficult to maintain.

Sample comments:

Teachers should have more input. Shared decision-making is very seldom allowed.

Many short deadlines for teachers. Not much chance for interaction with fellow teachers. Little joint decision-making. There is little room for disagreement.

Much work and improvement is needed. Administrator-teacher relationship needs improvement. Counselors need to recognize that not all El Camino students are going to college.

A big plus to J. Petterle and staff for a difficult task done well!!! One constructive critique - the staff Wednesday a.m. meetings are excellent; however, only one way dialogue. An occasional "prep-period" meeting to allow expression of concern or clarification.

A tremendous improvement this year--has been rewarding, but stressful. The increase in work turned in, parent contact, and number of meetings has kept me working longer than before, but I think it has been effective.

Not enough reinforcement for a job well done. We all need to hear it!

I'm tired.

No women administrators!

STUDENTS - 62% commented

A great many students responded when asked to comment about El Camino' first year. However, most of their statements were reiterations of comments made in other sections of the survey.

Students clearly do not like closed campus nor do they like split lunches. While many students are supportive of some teachers a great many feel that teachers should be re-screened and that several teachers should be "changed." Some students stated that counselors had been very helpful to them while others did either that counselors do not have enough time, or that they are not helpful. Several students felt they were not treated well (respected) by administrators and that administrators are too preoccupied with discipline. Others spoke well of individual administrators.

The total sports program was not highly supported by students. Several girls felt there was little interest in girls sports. Many students were critical of football and basketball. Some students spoke well of individual sports in contrast to team sports. Some students enjoyed the spring sports program.

Student activities also received criticism. Most students felt there were not enough and several students asked for some kind of activity during the day. Rallies were criticized as "always being the same thing." Student government received both plaudits and criticism. The major criticism identified was lack of communication from government to the students.

On the other hand, a great many students spoke well of El Camino (although they, too, dislike closed campus). These positive comments were usually more general in nature and frequently spoke of "continuing to improve." For example, "Overall, I think this year turned out to be a good one at El Camino. Some improvements, in my opinion are needed, but by next year El Camino will run smooth and sound," and "I feel that El Camino has had a pretty good first year. The problems it has faced will be worked out in time. I would enjoy it immensely if the campus was open to seniors in the fall" (written by an eleventh grader).

An educational goal set by administrators and staff was achieved with at least one student who stated, "I learned so much more than I had intended to learn."

TABLE

CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Parent Survey

122 responding or 45% of sample

Child's Grade:	9th	24%
	10th	31%
	11th	28%
	12th	17%
Child's Sex:	Male	50%
	Female	50%
Because of where we live, my child would normally attend El Camino High School:	Yes	77%
	No	23%
My child's high school grades tend to be mostly:	A's&B's	44%
	B's&C's	37%
	C's&D's	17%
	D's&F's	3%
After high school, I hope my child will:		
Attend 4-year college or university		72%
Attend a 2-year community college		22%
Attend a technical or vocational school		3%
Work - not attend college		3%
Enter military service		1%
Not work and not attend college		-

Student Survey

1079 responding or 82% of sample

Grade:	9th	29%
	10th	28%
	11th	26%
	12th	17%
Sex:	Male	54%
	Female	46%
Because of where I live, I would normally attend El Camino:	Yes	73%
	No	27%
My high school grades tend to be mostly:	A's&B's	39%
	B's&C's	46%
	C's&D's	14%
	D's&F's	1%
After graduation from high school I plan to:		
Attend 4-year college or university		50%
Attend a 2-year community college		30%
Attend a technical or vocational school		6%
Work - not attend college		10%
Enter military service		3%
Not work and not attend college		2%

Staff Survey

72 responding or 87% of sample

At El Camino, I am a (staff may have more than one role so total should be greater than 100%)		
Administrator		8%
Counselor		6%
Teacher		83%
Other		4%
Sex:	Male	61%
	Female	39%
I worked at El Camino last year:	Yes	86%
	No	14%

APPENDIX B

Student Application

☐ Check this box if you are interested but cannot apply because of transportation problems. Return the completed form also.

Mail to:
Fundamental High School
3738 Walnut Ave.
Carmichael, CA. 95608

EL CAMINO FUNDAMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL

Application for Enrollment DATE_____

STUDENT'S NAME_____ BIRTHDATE_____

ADDRESS_____ zip code_____ HOME PHONE_____

PARENT'S (GUARDIAN'S) NAME_____ BUSINESS PHONE_____

CURRENT YEAR IN SCHOOL (circle) 8 9 10 11 grade

STUDENT CURRENTLY ATTENDS_____ SCHOOL

Parent and student understand that El Camino Fundamental High School will

- stress the basics
- require homework
- not have a smoking area
- be a closed campus
- require reasonable standards of dress
- have well defined and enforced discipline and attendance policies

AND

Provide an orderly and purposeful school environment for parents and students willing to make a commitment to such an environment.

- offer electives
- offer co-curricular activities and athletics

Students applying will receive notification of admission and other information by April 2, 1979, assuming enough students apply to warrant opening the school.

_____
Student's Signature

_____
Parent's Signature

_____
Date

March 20, 1979 is the deadline for receiving applications

EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL

Goals and Teacher Expectations

MEMO TO: Staff

FROM: Joe Petterle

SUBJECT: Goals and Teacher Expectations

DATE: April 26, 1979

Attached please find a copy of the Goals and Teacher Expectations for El Camino Fundamental High School, the signature form for volunteering to teach at El Camino next year, and, where applicable, a tentative athletic assignment for next year.

The purpose of this attachment (Goals and Teacher Expectations) is to inform you of what will be expected of teachers. There will be changes at El Camino next year; those who sign on must be ready to adapt. I hope that each of you will carefully consider your decision to remain and do so in light of the attachment. I want no surprises.

I believe that El Camino can and will provide an exceptionally sound education for young people next year. This will require a strong commitment from everyone who is a part of the program. Teachers can expect the following from the administration:

1. Dedication to the fundamental concept of education.
2. Strong support for the teacher in his/her role as teacher, leader, disciplinarian.
3. Quick and firm response to reported student misconduct, with at least one administrator always on duty.
4. Regular acceptance of teacher input and, in turn, clear communication with teachers about matters of concern to the staff.
5. Protection of the integrity of the instructional day through regular use of the established class period schedule.
6. Provision of adequate time for teachers to fulfill their responsibilities.

I appreciate your patience and forebearance throughout these last few weeks and look forward to working with those of you who choose to remain. We do indeed have a challenge before us.

Thank you.

JP/bh

Attachments

58

GOALS and TEACHER EXPECTATIONS
For
EL CAMINO FUNDAMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL

Pursuant to the direction of the Board of Trustees of the District, given pursuant to Section 58500 et seq. of the Education Code of the State of California, El Camino High School will open in September of 1979 as an alternative school.

The goal of El Camino High School will be to provide each student with a solid foundation in basic subjects which include English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. These areas will be emphasized and maximum resources will be directed toward providing students with an exceptionally strong education in these areas. In each of such areas of study, the basic skills of reading, writing and computation will be stressed. All personnel will strive to achieve an atmosphere conducive to optimum learning in all areas, which shall be accomplished in part by enforcement of disciplinary rules and elimination of all unnecessary distractions. These goals are to be achieved while simultaneously offering the traditional program and activities generally associated with high schools.

It is expected that teachers at El Camino Fundamental High School will:

1. Be able to adapt to a new school environment and altered teacher expectations
2. Help to establish curriculum and teach according to it.
3. Endorse change directed toward emphasizing the basics
4. Incorporate "basics" into non-basic subject areas.
5. Maintain a solid background in subject area and an awareness of current trends, techniques and new knowledge in that subject area.
6. Grade according to system established in conjunction with staff
7. Comply with established attendance procedures
8. Require homework on a regular basis
9. Grade all assignments and return to students within three days or a reasonable time, depending on the nature of the assignment.
10. Be able to estimate the grade in progress for any student at the end of each week.
11. Provide remedial help for students who both need it and will benefit from and involve parents in these remedial plans when necessary.
12. Provide continuous progress evaluations to students and parents, including being available to meet with parents at reasonable times as necessary
13. Recognize that diagnosis is indispensable to lesson plan design
14. Share the burden of schoolwide student behavior, including the enforcement of disciplinary rules or reporting violations thereof as appropriate
15. Provide a proper model for student emulation in behavior and appearance

(continued)

16. Supervise students when confronted with misbehavior at any time while on campus or at student activities
17. Utilize sound discipline procedures both in and out of the classroom
18. Expect frequent classroom visitations
19. Work with students in co-curricular pursuits on an equably assigned basis.
20. Assist in campus supervision in accordance with regular schedule.
21. Receive inservice as necessary in basic skills areas to enable systemwide work on these skills in other subject areas.
22. Grade all papers for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and mathematics as applicable, as well as content, utilizing terminology that is consistent with that used in the basic subject area.

Teacher Agreement Form

EL CAMINO FUNDAMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL

NAME: _____ April 27, 1979

I hereby volunteer to teach at El Camino Fundamental High School and in so doing I agree to work in accordance with the goals and teacher expectations outlined in the attached Goals and Teacher Expectations for El Camino Fundamental High School

_____
(signed)

Date: _____

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